

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Foster Care Month Honors Foster Children and Parents

COLUMBUS, OHIO – The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is joining Governor John R. Kasich in recognizing May as Foster Care Month and urging all Ohioans to do something positive to make a difference for children in foster care.

“We are very grateful for the hard work and dedication of Ohio’s foster and kinship families, and we’re pleased to join the governor in recognition of their commitment,” said ODJFS Director Michael Colbert. “For thousands of children, foster care means more than a roof over their heads; their lives are often changed forever through the kindness and support of their foster families.”

Ohio has 11,851 children in foster care and 5,853 licensed foster homes. In addition, many children live with grandparents or other relatives when their parents cannot care for them. This kinship care increases stability for children by keeping them closer to their siblings, extended families, neighborhoods and schools.

“Foster families and kinship families do not get enough recognition for all the work and service they provide,” Colbert said. “These families and individuals are the reason many of the children have been reunified with their parents. Please join us in recognizing and honoring these caring individuals and families during foster care month.”

ODJFS is also focused on improving services for former foster children. Every year in Ohio between 1,000 and 1,300 young people age out of the foster care system. Through an initiative called “Connecting the Dots from Foster Care to Employment and Independent Living,” ODJFS plans to connect former foster children with mentors, job training classes, housing and medical assistance, to help them in their efforts to become healthy, independent adults.

Ohioans interested in becoming foster parents or learning more about the foster care system should contact their county public children services agency. A directory of county agencies is available at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/county>.

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